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FLORA'S KALEIDOSCOPE.

HOWEVER excellent and edifying the pursuit of botany may be as a science, I have always been inclined to regard it with a modification of that mental shrinking which induces me to decline the study of anatomy. For great botanists, I entertain a profound respect; I bow to the dim shade of Theophrastus; I kiss the feet of Tournefort and Jussieu; I propitiate the learned ghost of Linnaeus; Ray and Zobel have my blessing; but amateur flower-killers are my aversion, and I pass a petty experimentalist and his tin box with an instinctive and inevitable shudder, mildly suggestive of Burke and the Inquisition. I do not profess to know the Latin name of a single flower; I cannot tell the difference between an exogen and an endogen; I regard a lily with feelings which I cannot concede to a bamboo-cane or a bunch of asparagus; I gather my snow-drops and hepaticas without counting their stamens; I feed my canary with plantain and chickweed without thinking of 'cylindrical spikes' and pentandria; spores and panicles, and peduncles and bracts, are to me an unknown tongue; I admire my lichens and mosses without remembering that they are only *Cryptogamia*; I will not be told that my daisies are *Syngenesia*, nor have my butter-cups defined as *Thalamifloral exogens*; I cannot for the life of me tear a rose or a strawberry blossom to pieces, in order to resolve it into its first principles, or to enlighten myself as to its primeval atoms. All this painful and beneficent vegetable surgery I thankfully leave to the botanical demonstrator, taking his erudite dexterity for granted, but keeping my kaleidoscope out of his way, to shew me Chaucer lying among the daisies, or Cowper and Beau hunting for water-lilies, or Shakspeare standing in the March wind looking at the daffodils, and dreaming of the swallows. 'It is my faith that every flower enjoys the air it breathes;' and in the annual miracle of flowers, I see set forth in most vivid allegory a dream of hope to man. It pleases me to walk in 'God Almighty's garden,' and to yield myself to the sweet irresistible mournfulness with which they bind themselves to the living, dying heart, that can claim at least the brotherhood of origin with these lovely children of the dust. I like to puzzle out their legends, to read their voiceless symbols, to talk with the flowers that are sown by the winds or the angels, watered by the showers, fed by the sunbeams, and cradled by the lulling night. Never, to the most attentive and beseeching eye, do they present or reproduce a reiteration of themselves, or of one another, however perfect the old model, however faultless the desired

grouping. Flora's light-pictures are never repeated; her kaleidoscope is always turning. To lay aside that technical 'language of flowers' which has only been brought to a climax in the fragrant east, is not the whole earth, under their countenance, still 'of one language and one speech?' To the child, they are the elves of 'life's fairy-time;' he looks for fays under the lady-fern, sees their rubies in the golden cowslip-cups, holds sacred the strawberry flower, listens for the peal of the swinging harebells; he gathers them, crushes them as playthings in his rude hands, loves them, wearies of them, throws them away. Flowers are the universal moralists; not one but has its lesson, its sermon, or its song. Roses and lilies, in wise hands and at sacred feet, have formed the texts for holiest themes, for deepest parable and tenderest morality. Faith and duty, and love and hope, and peace and gladness, smile on their dewy faces; fading in quiet hands, they speak of death; creeping over low green graves, they whisper of immortality. They are the emblems alike of feasting and mourning, of speech and silence, of sorrow and hope, of grief and love. They have mingled largely in the pious superstitions of all nations; and, indeed, without a figure, they might be called the divinities of natural religion. Sacrifices were dressed in flowers, temples adorned with them, the dead fondly strewn with their sympathetic blossoms; the gods of springs and running waters were propitiated with their fragrant incense; and of these *Fontinalia*, a curious relic may still be found in Derbyshire and some of the midland English counties, where the pretty custom of 'well-dressing' is retained by the flower-loving peasantry. Nor is divination by means of flowers altogether extinct in the southern villages, where they are even yet invited to employ their harmless witchery in disclosing intricate and important love-secrets. With death, a universal instinct appears to associate them. The ancient Jews were buried in gardens. Poor Shelley passionately desired to lie among the flowers—as passionately as the milk-maid who wished to die in spring, that she might have a store of them stuck on her winding-sheet. Sir William Temple, a florist of a very different order, though his bones were laid elsewhere, had his heart buried among his Dutch flowers. The symbolism which made the beautiful rose an emblem of silence, consecrated it in a peculiar manner to the sad hush of death; and thus, while in one chamber, it was twined with myrtle at a festive entertainment, in the next it might be shedding its dying sweetness on the withered lips of a corpse.

Flower-worship, if we except the sublime and almost

spiritual religion of the Magians, embodies the least questionable, or, at all events, the most innocuous system of idolatry. Who can wonder, for instance, that the imaginative Egyptian bowed to the imperial lotus, as she slept and waked upon his floating rice-fields, heaving and sinking with the rising and setting sun, as if she were indeed the *hœfdie*, the bread-giver? Her white bud, close folded, dreaming on the dreaming water, men fancied the wave-rocked egg of the fabled halcyon. Even the stagnant Celestials opened their dull eyes to worship her azure beauty, and the dull Japanese throned their stupid idols on her dense massy leaves of waxen green. In the dark ages of the Christian Church, the monks found a practical problem for their ingenuity, in the economy which yielded to their skilful hands, at will, harmless medicaments and deadly poisons. They invented a *clock of flowers*, and discovered or imagined the most wonderful devices emblazoned on their tiny hatchments. Not satisfied with these minor undertakings, they at length achieved a complete floral directory, which assigned to each flower a particular day in the year to blossom, and a special saint for a tutelary genius. Of the three hundred and sixty-five worthies thus selected for honour, some, of course, are very whimsical, and some extremely dubious; yet the thing is in itself a curiosity, and some of the adaptations are not without poetry, significance, and humour. Thus, to the Virgin they dedicated the drooping snow-drop and the immaculate lily; to St Barnabas, the sunflower; and to the first martyr of Christianity, the deep purple heath; the hyacinth and wild harebell were assigned to St George, as the champion of merry England and 'blue-haired Ocean'; Leo the Great had to put up with the dandelion; while St Dunstan presided over the helmet-like cowl of the deadly monkshood; to St Augustine was intrusted the flushing rhododendron; while the sweet-scented stock blossomed under the eyes of his gentle mother; sweet-william, of course, has its own godfather; the sensitive plant is for St Vitus; blue bells for St Dominic; and so on, *ad infinitum*.

Nor are historical associations wanting. In ancient times, the river Arno was emblematically represented by the figure of an aged man, guarded by a lion that grasped a red lily in its dexter paw. If this is the species known in this country as Turk's cap, Leigh Hunt, an authority in such matters, assigns to it a yet more ancient and more honourable niche in the classic temple, as the veritable hyacinth, due to that unlucky game at quoits in which Apollo terminated for ever his Spartan pupil's gymnastic exploits; for it carries still its crimson ensign, and on its blood-sprinkled lips may still be traced the old Greek dirge-like 'Ai, ai!' This fancy recalls a whimsical middle-age miracle, registered in that repertory of monkish fable, *The Golden Legend*. A knight more noble than witty, and more valiant than wise, betook himself, about the meridian of life, to a holy abbey, where he might repent of his sins and learn his alphabet. But in spite of the most strenuous efforts of his saintly pedagogues, no result of any kind could be achieved upon this dull-brained antique, except the stereotyped vocables, Ave Maria, which lesson he dinned, in monotonous perfection, into the ears of the whole monastery, until he died. No sooner was he laid in silence under the sod, than a majestic *fleur de lis*

sprang from his grave; and upon every petal there gleamed and glittered in letters of gold the everlasting 'Ave Maria.' Stirred by a praiseworthy curiosity, the monks determined to dig to the root of this mystery, which they found, *literally*, in the mouth of the knightly dunce, who was thus empowered to rebuke the secret exultation with which the holy clerks had sung *Requiescat in pace*.

The etymology of Syria is traced by some to a rose of peculiar fragrance called *suri*. The emblem rose of England gave its name to her longest and bloodiest civil feud. White roses climbing up old walls in Scotland speak faintly of Katherine Gordon. The brakes of broom in March glitter with the name of Plantagenet. The French lilies, once quartered with our lions, recall sundry passages, grave and glad, in our national story. And in their own land, while they droop among the Bourbon banners, sweet violets creep to the feet of dead Napoleon. Strangest pseudonym for that captive eagle, soaring from Elba with his broken chain—*Père la Violette*. And France has other floral memories. The golden violet, prize of the troubadours, brings to mind the old May-games of Toulouse, and their reputed foundress, Clemence Isaure. Her image stood over an old gateway there for centuries, perhaps it still remains; but the marble flowers are broken from the marble hands, and the inscriptive legend can no longer be deciphered upon the brazen tablet over which time has breathed so rudely. Something of melancholy, as usual, hides in the shadow of the old romance which faintly keeps her name. Her triplet of emblem-flowers, the violet, eglantine, and marigold, blossomed in gold and silver on the breasts of successive minnesingers for five hundred years or so, till the crimson tide of the Revolution washed that too into the land of fable.

Before passing into the immediate presence of the Juno of floral mythology, Leigh Hunt must turn the kaleidoscope. It is not easy to resist the joyous chorus which he puts into the lips of the flowers:

The dear lumpish baby, humming with the May-bee,
Hails us with his bright stare, stumbling through the
grass;
The honey-dropping moon, on a night in June,
Kisses our pale pathway leaves, that felt the bride-
groom pass.
Age, the withered clinger, on us mutely gazes,
And wraps the thought of his last bed in his child-
hood's daisies.

See—and scorn all duller taste—how heaven loves
colour;
How great Nature clearly joys in red and green;
What sweet thoughts she thinks of violets and pinks,
And a thousand flushing hues, made solely to be seen;
See her whitest lilies chill the silver showers,
And what a red mouth is her rose, the woman of the
flowers.

To the classic symbolism of the rose, we have already alluded. Cupid, say the fables, conveyed this tempting bribe to Harpocrates, on the part of his mother Venus, and thus secured the reticence of the silent god, while he provided an allusive emblem which is still perpetuated among ourselves—though our white and crimson roses, as certain of our old poets assure us, sprang from the blood of Adonis and the tears of the mother of love. The Jews, casting their eyes over the sweet rose-valleys of Palestine, accept a less pagan legend. The rose, they say, had slumbered in the lost Paradise—till a young maiden, wrongfully accused of some heinous crime, was condemned to a death of fire. But the fatal torch, as it touched the pile, burst out into blossoming roses; and

the holy child was borne home in triumph, with this verdict of acquittal round her innocent head. This universal queen extends her sceptre from Iceland to the wall of China; from the sunny cradle of the Pierian sisters to the chilly Lapland homes, where, for a few brief days of sudden summer, the streams are 'fringed with roses.' But it is in Persia that she achieves her greatest triumph; there, in a perfect wilderness of sweets, the fire-worshippers hold their feast of roses, to the music of the faithful nightingales, who pour their floods of song from real rose-trees, crimsoned with dewy blossoms, to twice the height of a man. The Hakims of Arabia well knew the value of this crimson rose; while Egyptian pharmacy distilled from its snowy twin, that fragrant water, and the yet more precious otter which is the quintessence of its sweetness. Stealing westward, is the wild yellow rose of the Levant; its more hardy sister of Italy and France; and the beautiful Austrian, folding its golden petals round a scarlet heart. Many of these strangers have been naturalised with us, in addition to our own endless varieties. While the parent Eve, mother of thousands, the sweet wilding of our summer hedges, climbs with swift feet and rosy fingers beside our beaten ways, sheds honey for the bee, rocks the gray nest of the chaffinch, opens her heart to the butterfly, feeds the little rose-beetle on her sunny lips, and gives to that tiny upholsterer, the carpenter-bee, the deftly fashioned curtains of his curious home. Nor does she lack her poets. Spenser kneels to this Faery Queen; Beaumont and Fletcher wave their hands to her; Shakspeare chides and caresses her at will; Fanshawe moralises to her; Herrick brings his epigram, and Raleigh his legend; Milton sees her thornless in her native Eden, and calls her to strew the hearse of his Lycidas. And without passing over the debatable ground of more modern poetry, old Gawin Douglas shall tell us, in his quaint, fresh vernacular, how Scotch roses budded in the fifteenth century:

The rose-knobbis tetand forth their head,
Gan chip, and kyth [shew] their vernal lippis red,
Crisp scarlet leaves sheddand, baith at anes,
Cast fragrant smell amid from golden grains.

Not less idolised, perhaps even worshipped in a more human way, is that little English amaranth, the daisy. It is impossible to quote at large, but equally impossible to refrain from looking at Chaucer on his knees in the dewy grass, breathing orisons to the 'eye of dale':

And doune on knees anon right I me sette,
And as I could, this fresh floure I grette,
Kneeling alway, till it unclosed was,
Upon the smale, softe, swete grass;
And leaning on my elbow and my side,
The longe day I shope me to abide,
For nothing else, and I shall not lie,
But for to looke upon the daisie,
That well by reason men it calle may
The daisie, or else the eye of the dale—
Whan that the sunne out of the south gan west,
And that this floure gan close and gan to rest,
For darkness of the night, the which she dred,
Home to mine house full swiftly I me sped,
To gone to rest, and early for to rise,
To seeene this floure to sprede, as I devise.

The dear old man! let us hope that he had his 'daisies white and red' to 'sleep and wake upon his senseless grave.' Margaret of Hungary is said to have given this little pearl its French name, and another Margaret, queen of Navarre, and grandmother of the Great Henry, chose it for her emblem, and under its auspices, called her own selection of pious and contemplative poetry by a title which was

capable of rather a multiplied significance, '*Marguerites de la Marguerite des Princesses*.' Among the older poets, Gawin Douglas was not so taken up with his primroses and violets, his silver-headed lilies, and his 'green-bloomed strawberry leaves,' but what he gave the first place to the daisy, unbraiding her crown small.' Shakspeare's eyes were never made to pass them on the April grass. Ben Jonson, so literal in his floral nomenclature, that he talks of the 'lips of cows,' is sure to have a corner for the 'bright day's eyes.' Herrick, a very Quixote, must chide them for their early hours; but the rosy lashes of the child-like sleepers close at sundown, in spite of Julia. Among the moderns, there is much of love and worship; but only Wordsworth can take his master's place as high-priest of the daisy:

Thee, Winter, in the garland wears
That thinly decks his few gray hairs;
Spring parts the clouds with softest airs,
That she may sun thee;
Whole summer fields are thine by right,
And autumn, melancholy wight,
Doth in thy crimson head delight
When rains are on thee.

Sitting upon the 'dappled turf,' he wearies art and nature for similes for his darling; she is a lark, a star, a nun, an apostle; a queen with a ruby crown, a little one-eyed Cyclops, 'a silver shield with boss of gold,' to cover a fairy in fight. Walking in the grassy lanes, the daisies meet him like troops of morris-dancers; dreaming over his favourite brother's grave, they seem to him 'a starry multitude.' And what can be prettier or more suggestive than this poet-lesson to a child?

The daisy, by the shadow that it casts,
Protects the lingering dew-drop from the sun.

Dr Good and James Montgomery might both be cited here; and who forgets the gowans of *Auld Lang Syne*, or the little martyr of Mossiel? Shelley, always dreaming of flowers, has set his daisies in a carcanet too fragile and too lovely to be broken:

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets,
Daisies, those pearly Arcturi of the earth,
The constellated flower that never sets;
Faint ox-lips; tender blue-bells, at whose birth
The sod scarce heaved; and that tall flower that wets
Its mother's face with heaven-collected tears,
When the low wind, its playmate's voice, it hears.

The innocent daisies might have had their rivals, if Chaucer had ever seen the snow-drops clustered white and glistening on the cold February grass—the only creatures pure enough to lay their heads on the new-fallen snow, where their soft petals of frosted alabaster droop over an inner circle of faint, sweet green. The poetical superstition of the Romish Church went not so far astray when it set them, like the doves of the purification, in the hands of the worshipping Virgin.

'*Majnycklu!*' cry the cold Swedes, when the first primrose (key of May) unlocks the jewel-house of spring, and holds up its soft lips, wet with the melting snow, that is chased by the swift flowers over the face of the stubborn rocks. And we, in our more gradual year, know that there is but a step between the primrose and the violet, that is even now opening its purple eyes under the dead brown leaves. Some old divine talks of the 'primrose-way to the everlasting bonfire;' but we would rather listen to Herrick's music, who must be forgiven his absurd nonsense about the violets for the sake of his tender, childlike primroses, and the yet more sweetly serious pathos of his 'faire daffodills.' But no one must steal the violets from Shakspeare. 'Violets dim,' says Perdita, 'far sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes.' (And if it

is true that Venus purpled their stainless leaves with the ichor of her celestial foot, no wonder). The exquisite opening of *Twelfth Night* seems but a whispered note of preparation for the approaching heroine, the faint, sweet, stealing shadow of Viola herself. When poor *Io*, say the fables, was wandering disconsolate in the disguise of a heifer, Jupiter, thinking no existent vegetable sufficiently fragrant or delicate for her food, created violets for her delectation. This perhaps was the reason why Venus, according to Herrick, 'beat them black and blue.' No such legend, however, can attach to the stainless lilies of the valley,

Shading, like detected light,
Their little green-tipped lamps of white,

as they pass, like the wise virgins, round the entire circle of the earth, wreathing the very poles in their fearless and saintly beauty.

The ground is hardly broken; we cannot crush the flower-stars into this glass of ours. The ethereal Shelley must hold it for one moment before we lay it down. Look here!

The snow-drop, and then the violet,
Arose from the ground with warm rain wet,
And their breath was mixed with fresh odour, sent
From the turf, like the voice and the instrument.
Then the pied wind-flowers and the tulip tall,
And narcissi, the fairest among them all,
Who gaze on their eyes in the stream's recess,
Till they die of their own dear loveliness;
And the Naiad-like lily of the vale,
Whom youth makes so fair, and passion so pale,
That the light of its tremulous bells is seen
Through their pavilions of tender green;
And the hyacinth purple, and white and blue,
Which flung from its bells a sweet peal anew,
Of music so delicate, soft, and intense,
It was felt like an odour within the sense.
Broad water-lilies lay tremulously,
And starry river-birds glimmered by;
And the sinuous paths of lawn and of moss,
Which led through the garden along and across,
Were all paved with daisies and delicate bells,
As fair as the fabulous asphodels,
And flowerets which drooping as day drooped too,
Fell into pavilions, white, purple, and blue,
To roof the glow-worm from the evening dew.

My kaleidoscope is broken; the spirit of the frost struck its crystal too roughly with his wing of adamant, and shivered away its jewelled atoms. 'O golden, golden summer, what is it thou hast done?' The pure sad snow-drops, like the angels of children, have gone back to heaven: the fragile mosaic of the primroses is trampled under foot; the hawthorn, thick with snowy blossom, no longer trails its boughs in the sunlight; the fern droops sere and shrivelled, mourning for the foxglove's purple bells; the blue eyes of the speedwell are closed in death; the bees hum no more in the creamy tufts of meadow-sweet; the forget-me-nots have dropped their golden lamps into the stream; the fairy-fires are quenched; the water-lilies dream under the dark-waved lake; the red flags of the poppies are trodden into the dust, where the crocus sleeps in mail of gold; the blue gentianella lies under the cold iceberg; the narcissus has wept itself to death; the glossy periwinkle has hidden her blue and silver stars, and the slender fingers of the jessamine cling flowerless to the chilly wall; the pansies, floating after poor Ophelia, have withered on Milton's grave; the delicate convolvulus has closed her fragile cup, and the winds have caught away the anemone, their pale devotee. The aureola of the marigold has faded; scarlet lychnis has blown out his 'burning shining light;' the daffodils have

'prayed,' and departed; the passion-flower has laid down her cross; the lilies have gone into the marriage. The flowers are dead and buried; the wind has chanted them to sleep, and is shaking over them, with viewless hands, his funeral sod of leaves. Yet I found a primrose, looking out with pale eyes from the dank moss at the foot of a beech-tree, this morning, and through its chilly tears it seemed to smile, and sing up to the wild wind its low 'Resurgam.'

A STORY OF THE UNDERGROUND RAILWAY.

SOME months ago—to follow in a condensed form the narrative lately given in an American newspaper—there was living, no matter where, a negro woman, some fifty years of age, named Katy. She had been married according to the religious code of the south, by a ceremony which pledged the twain to each other 'during their lives, unless otherwise unavoidably separated.' Katy was an active, well-principled woman, and lived happily with her husband, until his death. This took place from a severe flogging which he received in consequence of having resented some gross indignities shewn towards his wife. Beaten till he was insensible, and pitched into his hut, he died in a few hours—literally whipped to death. Though this was years ago, yet Katy even now weeps like a child when repeating the details of the outrage.

This murder, as it must be called, though taken no notice of as such, left Katy a widow with two children, both girls, of ten and twelve years old. It also raised up in her a determined resolution to break away and be free, and hereupon the latent energy of her nature came into powerful action. She knew that money was indispensable, so she worked, and toiled between tasks that her virtuous resistance caused her master to increase in severity, and by trafficking with the negroes around, accumulated a small sum. But it took twenty years to do so! During this long night of darkness she had no human sympathy but her own unshaken determination to be free. Meanwhile, her two girls, grown large enough to be profitable as breeders, had been married to fellow-slaves on the same plantation. Each had now three children. Katy saw with grief these new impediments to liberty springing up around her, but without the power to prevent it. She felt that she could easily provide for her own safety in flight, but was resolved to leave neither child nor grandchild in bondage. She saw, too, that these incumbrances were increasing in number, that her master was becoming embarrassed in his finances, and that some of them must be sold to relieve him. It might be her own offspring who would thus be taken. While they were united was therefore the time for them to fly. The flight agreed upon, preparation was made, and a night selected. They knew that dogs might be put on their trail. To prevent their feet depositing a scent which the dogs would recognise and follow, they filled their shoes with a preparation which effectually throws them off. What this preparation is, it is not necessary to name. It is hard for a plantation-slave to obtain it, not because of its cost, but because his isolation shuts him out from intercourse with the civilisation where only it abounds. A knowledge of its virtues is part of the occult knowledge of the plantation. All proper preparations being made, and the hour of departure almost come, one of Katy's daughters suddenly gave out. She had always been fearful of failure, and now her courage gave way. She refused to go. In this unexpected dilemma, the heroic mother was calm and resolute, and allowed of no derangement in her plans. Her mind had evidently come to some unexplained

conclusion. An hour before midnight, the whole party, one daughter alone excepted, took up their dangerous march.

I cannot undertake to give a tithe of the particulars of the perilous journey thus begun. But its incidents were most painful and exciting, while at times they were sadly discouraging. There were six young children to provide for—some to carry, some even to nurse, and all to be prevented from crying or complaining aloud. Then food must be provided, for the stock they started with was soon exhausted. By daylight they concealed themselves in swamps or thickets, sometimes lying a whole day in the water. By night they travelled, slowly, because they must move silently and with extreme caution. Twice they heard the distant baying of dogs, but not their master's, though they were evidently in chase of other runaways. Once, when but indifferently concealed within a swamp, rendered nearly dry by a long drought, they could distinctly hear the tramping of horsemen and their shouts to each other. These, so far as they knew, were all the perils they encountered. They may have been surrounded by dangers, but were unconscious of them. As they shunned the public roads, even in the darkest nights, it may be supposed their clothes were soon worn to tatters by the thickets of briars through which their straightforward journey led them. The north star was their only guide. Wherever that stood, they hurried onward, for they had always heard that beneath it there was no slavery. The six children were terrible clogs to their progress; but their fathers were strong men, with singularly patient dispositions. The heroine of this expedition never faltered for a moment. Once fairly clear from her master's plantation, her courage rose into assurance of success, and she performed prodigies of endurance. She forded creeks with a heavy child on her shoulder, and swam broad rivers, supporting with one hand the same laborious burden. Her mind was so intensely excited that she slept but little, and ate even less. Every faculty was strung to its highest tension. As she was the leader of the troop into the wilderness, so she was the life and soul of it through all its tortuous wanderings.

How long they starved and shivered on this journey, Katy is unable to tell; she thinks it must have been four weeks. At the end of that period, as near as can be judged, and some three hours after nightfall, while quietly tramping over a ploughed field, they were brought suddenly to a halt by a high and substantially built fence. While examining how it was best to be got over, the figure of a man unexpectedly revealed itself to them. He had been standing against the fence when they came up—had heard and seen them, but they had not seen him. Fear took possession of them for the moment, and they huddled round poor Katy. The young children also began to cry. No wonder; it was the first white man they had seen since they fled from their master. 'Who are you?' the man shouted. But the fugitives made no reply. One of them, dropping a child from his shoulders, and passing over to his wife, put himself in a posture for defence, with a short, heavy club, which he quickly drew from the belt by which it was suspended behind him. The stranger again called out: 'Are you looking for friends?' To this Katy quickly answered: 'Oh! yes, master, for God's sake, help us!' Instantly he opened the door of a dark lantern which he carried in his hand, and the full flash from a brilliant burner fell directly on the fugitives. Dazzled by the glare, they covered their eyes, and while thus half-blinded by the sudden illumination, he came close up to them. He comprehended the case in an instant. 'Be quiet, and don't be afraid,' he said; 'you are now among friends, and I will take care of you. Come with me.'

The fugitives were in Pennsylvania! They had

struck the first station on the Underground Railway, and this man was the resident agent!

He closed his lantern, and led the way towards a light which, for the first time, they now saw gleaming over the fields a mile ahead. It was the agent's residence. When they reached it, he led them to a barn near by, unlocked the door, and directed them to lie down on a wide-spread haymow, where the hay had evidently been prepared more for sleeping purposes than for feeding cattle. Here he asked them in the kindest manner if any of them were hungry. Katy tells me now that the soft, kind, and pitying voice of this good man fell upon her heart with an overwhelming tenderness that melted her into tears. All doubts of her having got among friends instead of enemies, were now removed, and giving way to a burst of thankfulness, and of weeping, she confessed that none but the children of the party had eaten anything for two days! Their protector told them to remain perfectly quiet, not to answer any person but himself, should they be spoken to from the outside, and he would shortly return with provision for them. Oh, what a contrast it was! the first kind word from a white man that any of them had heard for years! He passed out of the door, locked it behind him; and in half an hour returned, bearing a large bucket of hot milk, with bread, meat, and warm potatoes. His wife came with warm water, in which to wash the children's feet, which she knew by former experience would be found torn and blistered by hard travel, and ointment in which to wrap them up for the night. These famished creatures devoured the providential supply of food with eager thankfulness. How little can we who hear this narrative realise their true condition—two days without eating! The grateful meal over, they threw themselves down to sleep—tired, sore, and emaciated—and, for the first time in many nights, were able to dismiss all fear of either blood-hound or of man.

Who was the good Samaritan, what was the name of his farm, or the number of his family, are facts not lying within the line of explanation. The worthy man's wife and daughters clothed the ragged refugees, and his sons, by means of fleet horses, forwarded them to Philadelphia, where the party were lost to pursuit.

The remarkable incident of the story, however, remains to be told. The widowed Katy was famous as a cook. She immediately hired out in a hotel, and when she had saved three months' wages, quitted her place, and set off on her return to Virginia, determined to save that daughter whose sudden timidity had caused her to refuse joining in the general flight. This bold woman had formed this very determination when she first discovered her daughter's intention to remain on the plantation. Her mind came to the conclusion instantly, that if they all succeeded in getting off, she would return into the lion's den and rescue her child. Her mind being thus made up on the spot, the subject became an outside issue, and occasioned no embarrassment to the original plan. On this return-journey she travelled alone. Having no children to embarrass her, and but a single care upon her thoughts, she pushed forward with elastic heart and step, and after numerous hardships and dangers, found herself in a dense thicket, on her master's plantation. Here she quickly revealed her presence to her fellow-slaves. They were confounded by her hardihood, and listened with eager attention to the story of her dangers, her successes, and her explanation of what she had in view. They related to her how exasperated her master had been on discovering that ten of his chattels had gone off in a body; that, when pursuit had been found unavailing, her poor timid daughter had been subjected to repeated torture to compel a disclosure of the plot; that from this cruelty she was even then

scarcely recovered; that in the interval the master had died, and that his negroes were all soon to be sold at auction. With her usual quickness of purpose, Katy resolved to be off immediately. The negroes brought the daughter to her the same night. No reproaches passed from mother to child—the past she had forgotten—everything to her was in the future. As there was nothing about which to debate, and as the wardrobe of a slave is always on his back, they were ready to start on the instant. Long before midnight they began their flight. Two stalwart negro men, glowing with aspirations for liberty, accompanied them. It was lucky for all that they did. The daughter, still weak and sore from her terrible punishments, broke down on the way. They carried her whenever she was unable to walk, and heroically bore her over creek, and swamp, and river.

That sentinel, divinely stationed in the heavens, as well to guide the mariner over midnight waters as to lead the fugitive from bondage through a more desolate solitude on land—the north star—still shone before them, still proved their guide. The extraordinary sagacity of Katy was shewn throughout the journey. Her memory was such that she was able to recognise the features of the slave-region through which she passed, so that she followed very nearly the same route she had taken on the first exodus. How direct or circuitous it might be, she knew not. But twice it had proved a path of safety, and might be found so again. Extraordinary as it may seem, this remarkable woman found her way a second time to the Samaritan who kept the station on the Underground road. She marched bravely up to the farmhouse in a blinding tempest of rain, at midnight. A light was streaming from an upper window, shewing that some one of the family was about. While the others sheltered themselves under the lee of the building, she knocked timidly at the door. It was opened by the good man of the house. He beckoned her in, having immediately recognised her, and motioned her to a chair which stood in the hall. Here she sat down. No persons were visible below, but overhead she heard voices, and footsteps, and sobbing. There was sore sickness and grief in that house. The daughter who, on a former occasion, had washed her grandchildren's feet, anointed them and bound them up, was dying. With faltering accents the father told the dripping fugitive the story of his child's sickness and approaching dissolution, as he piloted her and her companions to the well-remembered haymow. But in his own grief he did not forget theirs. Dry clothing, warm food, and safe shelter were all extended to them as aforesaid. The good man's daughter died at daybreak. But that night the sons were far on their way with the fugitives to the next station. They reached their journey's end in safety. Was not Katy, though a poor negro woman, a real heroine?

THE SWORD.

From time immemorial, the sword has been associated in the minds of men with fearful power, and with symbolic meanings. It was at once the sign and the instrument; and for this very reason, perhaps, did awe and superstition invest it with dread and peculiar attributes. For the commonest object, as soon as it is lifted from its accustomed sphere, by being made the representative of an idea, affords always matter on which the imagination exercises its sway. It then at once ceases to be inorganic, lifeless, senseless matter: the thoughts which, as symbol, it called forth in us, we gradually allow ourselves to associate with the thing itself; and, by a strange process, it

ceases to be a dead lump, and becomes possessed of a nature that we would fain propitiate, if ruthless, and win over, if benign.

The very purposes to which the sword was put might well inspire a certain dread; and we all know of what a numerous issue Fear is the progenitor. The child of the present day would not be quite unmoved if alone in presence of the sword with which the murderer had suffered the penalty of his crime; and if some unperceived cause should make the sharp blade stir as he stood before it, that quiver would assuredly be met by a thrill through his whole frame, not to be repressed, although for the feeling no reason could be given; and, in the childhood of the nations, it was the same. An instrument which was to take away the wondrous gift of life, and in the place of quick existence, to bring immobility, silence, and impenetrable mystery, carried with it something of trouble and dread; and this, too, whether the victim were the dumb offering at the altar, or a human creature in the fight.

The weapon that had gleamed, instinct with life, above the havoc of the battle, might be fancied to grow weary of years of inactivity; and a chance starting of the blade from its scabbard would be interpreted as a sign of coming strife, which the roused weapon longed for with a trembling joy. Marvellous escapes, doughty blows dealt forth against antagonists, vainly shielded by their shirts of mail, might tend to encourage a belief that the blade was tempered by extraordinary means. The notion once cherished, every endeavour would be made that it should be realised; many a spell would accompany the weapon's forging, just as in later times prayers evoked a blessing on the unsullied blade.

From its form and mode of use, a peculiar intimacy springs up between the sword and him who carries it. When at rest, it still is at his side—a faithful friend ready at every need. It is girded to his loins: the two are firmly bound together. When grasped, it seems but a continuation of the warrior's arm; and being metal throughout, whatever it touches, causes a vibration to thrill through its length, and the living arm feels with a quick, nice sense each quiver of its doom-dealing helpmate. In the deadly fight, they become one.

The club, the spear, the battle-axe—none of these were to the warrior like his sympathetic sword. The bow and the musket, from their very contrivance, preclude such corresponding intimacy; they are, moreover, laid aside when done with; there is none of that close fellowship which exists between the soldier and his sword; for it is his companion, not only in the fatal struggle, but it goes with him to the bower and the festival.

The sword has become the type of manly daring; and if the arm that wielded it gave power to the weapon, it in return reflected back on the wearer consideration and honour; and he who bore it knew this, and the feeling bound the two more firmly together. For some men, the sword hewed out a path to authority and renown; it was their whole estate; their one sole faithful friend. To such, it was indeed a 'might-giver'; to others, it was a 'joy-bringer.' It involved itself with the destiny of the possessor, till at last it seemed to be the arbiter of his fate. Hence, in those old times—overgrown with the gray moss of countless centuries, and so remote, that we are now unable to discern what is cloud and what reality—men gave their good swords a name, as they did their heroes or their sons.

From being the symbol of vengeance, it grew into the avenger; and later even, when Christianity infused a different spirit into men's hearts, an old

remembrance, a but half-forgotten myth would still mix itself up with new customs and with holier rites. Christian and heathen alike, therefore, held the sword in honour. Its praise was sung by bard, and scald, and troubadour; by the old Scandinavian heroes, and by our own gallant cavaliers. It was the weapon with which the angels of God were armed; in all ages, it has been a symbol of power; in later times, it stands as the sign of lawful authority and justice. Men swore upon its blade; and the traitor at heart quailed when he thought of the vengeance he had himself thus called down on treachery. To the legionary of heathen Rome, such oath was inviolate. It also bound, too, still more closely such Christian men as those three of Schwytz, and Unterwalden, and Uri. It became the representative of a family's honour; a precious deposit, to be redeemed at any price. Its loss was a grief and a dishonour; its surrender, a token of being vanquished, and of submission. The hilt of the sword formed a cross, and as such, stood upright in the ground, was often used in the field when celebrating religious rites. As crucifix, it was held before the eyes of the dying soldier, or laid in the hand of him who bound himself by a vow. It was carried before the bridegroom by his friends at the wedding festival; it was laid, too, upon the bier of the departed warrior, thus accompanying him still on his last earthly pilgrimage—at once a trophy and a badge.

Thus we see not only how intimately the sword was associated with the affections and passions of humanity, but learn at the same time to account for the connection. Let us now dwell more particularly on the facts themselves, to which we have hitherto made only a passing allusion.

The sword of the Cimbri, like that of the ancient Gauls, was very long, pointless, and intended only for hewing. It was worn at the right side, suspended by two iron chains. By the Franks, it was carried in a girdle fastened round the body, while the Goths bore their weapon in a belt thrown across the shoulder. The Alimannen, or ancient Germans, had swords of a considerable length and breadth, but without a point, and two-handed; and when wielded by a powerful man, would, it was asserted, cleave rider and horse asunder at a single blow.

The custom of giving names to swords, which occurred so frequently in the romantic periods of the middle ages, was doubtless a heritage bequeathed by our heathen forefathers. In the Edda, the sword forged by Regin for Sigurd is called Gram; and in the Song of the Vikings, the smith Wieland makes one named Mimung. In the old lays about Charlemagne, we find his sword was known as Joyeuse; Roland's was called Durandel; and Flamberg that of Richard of Montalembow. Time and circumstance, but especially the character of the warrior, influenced the choice of the distinctive appellation. Thorstein Raudi* felt it was his good brand alone which would mete out to him the lordships he strove for, and which, too, would give him power; hence he shouts: 'Land-giver! I kiss thee; might-giver! I kiss thee.' When childless and sireless, he would rest beneath the brown heath, he exclaims, addressing himself to his sword:

Thou wilt rest on my bosom
And with it decay,
While harps shall be ringing,
And scalds shall be singing
The deeds we have done in
Our own fearless day.

And therefore, in a prophetic spirit, he adds one last exulting appellation, 'Song-giver! I kiss thee.' To

* See the *Sword-chant of Thorstein Raudi*, Motherwell's Poems.

the lover and patriot Körner, his sword was 'his bride that moved beside him.'

The ancient Britons cherished so great a love for their sword, that it was customary for the mother of every boy to offer him his first food on the blade-point of his father's sword, at the same time expressing the wish that from such weapon, and from such only, might he meet his death; thereby implying that he might fall in battle.

In remotest time, the sword was emblematic of chastity. When the Emperor Maximilian married Maria of Burgundy by proxy, he enjoins the knight who is to be his representative to lay him down in the bridal-bed, to which he is to lead the princess, in full armour, and to place a drawn sword between himself and her.

It was probably this attribute of purity which caused sword-blades to be used in certain ordeals, when the innocence or guilt of a wife was determined by the result of her walking among them.

That the perfect fabrication of an instrument on which the safety of him who bore it depended, should be a matter of earnest endeavour, is not to be wondered at. We now-a-days spare no pains in welding the iron for our anchors, neither do we leave unheeded any hint from science in forging our chain-cables. Had we not the help of science—of tested science—we too should seek other aid than that of Davy, or Faraday, or Liebig. There is a vulgar saying that poverty makes us acquainted with strange bed-fellows. It is true enough; but it is equally true, also, that our passions cause us to make strange acquaintanceships. The desire of fame, of wealth, of power, drives men to dare the incredible, and opens to their teeming imagination sources of help in emergency which, in calmer moments, the most credulous would hardly trust to. But what we ardently wish, we all are inclined to believe; hence the influence of the black art, which in its day took the place of modern science; the breath of the magician professing to do what the impalpable galvanic stream now really does accomplish. There is no doubt, if unable to analyse, that we should still employ spells and exorcisms; and if we have quite discarded the cabala, it is only because we are possessed of something that is more sure.

In the Amelungen Lied, the qualities of a charm-forged sword are given, and the method of its fabrication. The smith Wieland was the maker. He had made a wager with an armourer, named Amilias, who lived at King Neiding's court, that he would forge a sword better than any suit of armour made by the latter. Amilias had been working for eleven months day and night at his master-piece before Wieland took thought about the sword; hereupon the king reminded him of his promise, and he set to work. Within seven days he had a sword ready, so hard and sharp, that the like had never before been seen on earth. But Wieland wished first to prove its quality, and for this purpose went with it to a rapid river. He threw in a flock of wool one foot in thickness, and let the stream carry it against the edge of the blade. It cut the wool in two with the utmost nicety. The king was overjoyed, and waved the excellent sword that he hoped to possess above his head; but it was so heavy, that his arm soon dropped. Smith Wieland was not contented with his work, and, taking a file, reduced the whole to powder. He then took meal and milk, and mixed up with the filings, so that a paste was formed, which he gave to a family of fowls to eat, that for three days had been kept without food. The birds' dung he then carefully collected, put in a furnace, and separated the dross from the liquid metal. Of this purified steel he in six days again forged a sword, still better and lighter than the other. To prove it, he went to the river and threw

in light flakes of wool two feet in thickness, and tried the edge with the same success as before. But Wieland was not yet satisfied, and fling it to pieces, again gave it to the fowls to eat. This time he forged a blade that surpassed all that had ever yet existed, and was called 'Mimung.' With it he went to his rival Amilius, who meanwhile had fabricated a suit of armour, against which he affirmed every weapon would be shivered. Now, while he stood there in the market-place, Wieland laid his sword gently on the helm, and then gave it a slight pressure. On this the sword passed through both man and armour. Wieland asked: 'What do you feel?' 'It seems to me,' answered the other, 'as if a drop of water were trickling down my back.' 'Well,' replied Wieland, 'then shake off the drop.' Amilius shook himself, and fell in two halves to the earth, and was dead. So sharp was the good sword Mimung, that it had passed through helm, and bone, and marrow, without the other having felt it.

In the *Lady of the Lake*, we read that the sword of the Douglas was 'forged by fairy lore,' which, able to foreshew the coming of an enemy, on the entry of Snowdoun's knight 'self-unscaubarded' dropped upon the floor. The possession of such weapons was, as may be supposed, much coveted; and even when all faith in necromancy had died away, the sword of one who had wielded it successfully was always a desirable object. Some were consecrated by being wrapped up with relics and other holy things; on others, verses from the Bible were engraved; and we knew an old forester, now dead, who boldly went to meet the poachers, feeling sure of protection, as soon as he had girded round him his long hunting-knife, on which the Lord's Prayer was graven.

The swords of many leaders were obtained in a supernatural manner. Of Attila, the Hun, it is related that a herdsman observed blood on the leg of one of his oxen, and going nearer, saw something projecting from the ground. He dug it out, and behold, it was a large sword, which he presented to Attila. Nor was this belief in the wonderful transmission of a sword, of pagan growth only; the Maid of Orleans received the weapon with which she was to free her country from a divine messenger.

A vanquished enemy presented a sword to his conqueror, holding it by the point—a sign probably that the victor had the right to take his life with it. In some countries where land was ceded to another, the cession was symbolised by the presentation of a sword, that being the sign of judicial authority, and indicative of power over life and death.

Such meaning was no doubt implied when carried in marriage-processions. With the Frieslanders, a sword was borne before the bride, to indicate that her husband had power over her life.

To bear a coat of arms on the seal was a knightly privilege; and this right of affixing such seal to any document—to seal as well as sign—was a most cherished prerogative. For the sake of convenience, and that it might be always at hand, the seal was frequently engraven on the pommel of the sword. When, now, a knightly warrior impressed thus his arms on some record as testimony, a threefold power was given to the act, as, in addition to the mere fixing the signet, there was the bare upright sword-blade, which made the deed still more binding, and, thirdly, the cross on the hilt, by which Christ was called to witness what was done, and implied, moreover, 'in the name of God.'

It is certain, therefore, that the sword has, in a most strange manner, been closely connected with man's occupations and his faith, and this in all times, and among the most various people. It has entwined itself with the daily occurrences of his life; it has

been assigned a post in his institutions, and even in his temples it is received with honour. We know these things, and even see that they are so, yet in all this there is somewhat that still seems a mystery.

POUDRE ROSÉ.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

II.

THE prayers are done; the holy oil has dried upon the forehead of the anointed, tenantless clay, by the side whereof Adrienne Beaudésert is lying in a stupor of despair, which the nurse, gliding noiselessly about the room, does not think it prudent to disturb. We also will depart, following the abbé, who goes straight to the Château d'Em. The face of Madame la Baronne de Vautpré whitens visibly through the thick rouge, as she listens to the reverend man's tidings; and the moment his voice ceases, she hastens to place in his hands a large sum to be expended in masses for the dead man's soul. As to the funeral of the last male heir of the Beaudéserts, who is to be entombed in the catacombs of the Church of the Assumption, Madame de Vautpré desires that no expense shall be spared thereon; and the child Adrienne is to be assured that the heart of her too long estranged relative is yearning to embrace, to love, to cherish her. Monsieur Morlaix, moreover, who is shortly going to Paris on business, undertakes to be the bearer of one year's pension in advance, with the donor's good wishes, to Madame and Clarisse Beaudésert at Clichy.

The chief facts just related having been thought worthy of more than one paragraph in the local papers, and being skilfully marvelised to suit the public taste, had the effect of attracting a numerous concourse of curious spectators to the funeral—one of the most imposing, it was on all hands agreed, the *Pompes Funèbres* had got up for many years. The catafalque, especially, was magnificent; so much so, that the crowded congregation were divided in opinion as to which was most solemn and effective—it, the catafalque, or the Abbé Morlaix's funeral oration, grounded upon the scripture verse, 'Whoso breaketh a hedge, a serpent shall bite him.' The abbé's eloquent illustrations of his theme were also variously interpreted. Some held that they applied to the relentless cruelty of Madame la Baronne de Vautpré, punished by the untimely death, without male issue, of the heir to her house's honours; others, that the preacher had in mind the nephew's sin of ingratitude and disobedience towards his guardian and benefactress, resulting in misery and an early grave. Of this last opinion was Adrienne Beaudésert, upon whose heart the words of the abbé smote like so many sword-stabs aimed at her dead father, exciting in the mind of the wounded, sensitive girl a feeling of resentment towards the reverend orator, not, unhappily, to be soon or easily effaced. Of all the obsequious attendants surrounding her, there was not one who felt, or successfully assumed to feel, the slightest sympathy with her bitter grief. It was the less surprising, therefore—terribly indecorous in the heiress of Madame de Vautpré as it might be—that, upon recognising Jules Delpech in the crowd, as she was leaving the church, Mademoiselle Beaudésert darted away from her *entourage*, and threw herself sobbing violently into the gray-headed man's arms. She was, of course, promptly plucked back to her proper place in the procession, and a few minutes afterwards driven rapidly off to her future residence, the Château d'Em. Jules Delpech seemed to be not a little disconcerted, as well as astonished, at so sudden and public a demonstration of the young lady's regard; but the first flurry over, the emotion it excited, coloured, shaped, by an elastic, sanguine imagination,

assumed a hopeful, brilliant hue, as those telescopic eyes of his, piercing, as I have said, far into the dim future, descried the yet distant possibilities suggested by such pregnant facts as Mademoiselle Beaudésert's partiality or respect for himself so openly manifested; the well-remembered and marked partiality evinced towards Paul, his young and handsome son, by the unsophisticated heiress of an ailing lady long since passed her grand climacteric, when she, the heiress, was domiciled with her father at his cottage, furnishing, with minor collateral facts or fancies, ample material for castle-building. The subtle brain of Jules Delpech was glowing, palpitating with the crowding images it had conjured up by the time he reached his own door; whence, looking upwards in the direction of the Château d'Em, it seemed to him that the central tower of the splendid pile, high overtopping the intervening belt of forest trees, looked haughtily and contemptuously down upon the lowly hut whose habitant dared to lift himself even in imagination to that lordly eminence! 'For all that,' muttered the white lips of Jules Delpech, as he entered his cottage and closed the door, 'worse cards than we hold have won as great a game. "What," said the great orator of the Mountain, "is the secret and condition of an else impossible success?—*de l'audace, et encore de l'audace*!"—and moral audacity, where failure incurs no peril, niggard nature has not denied me.'

Jules Delpech was a *capitaine de douanes en retraite*, or, as we say, a superannuated officer of customs. His retiring pension was a small one; but the cottage in which he lived, and about three acres of adjoining land, were his own by inheritance; and as both himself and son—a really fine lad, about three years older than Adrienne Beaudésert, of pleasant manners and somewhat superior education—were sufficiently skilful and industrious cultivators, the retired *douanier* was looked upon, and really was, for his social status, a thriving, prosperous man. In one respect, Jules Delpech deserved commendation, though it may be that his conduct was governed by no higher motive than a wholesome dread of the penalties of the law—he refused, to the huge chagrin of many of the neighbours, to add to his income by the traffic which had helped his widowed mother, the late Madame Delpech, to keep house and land together, her son at school, and a well-filled purse of silver crowns always at hand for an emergency. Madame Delpech, in brief, ostensibly a herbalist, had for many years derived an income, though of no very considerable amount, probably, from the practice of a species of charlatanism, common in the French rural districts—that of selling to simple rustics, and not unfrequently to as simple-minded town-folk, certain charms, love-powders, vegetable preservatives of various kinds from harm, spiritual or corporeal, and magical compounds wherewith to compel the favour, else despaired of, of some obdurate Jeannette or Jeannot, as the case might be. One of those love-charms, called *poudre rosé*, had, from some accidental coincidence, attained so wide a celebrity as to engage the attention of the Correctional Police Court of Lyon, a distinction which had the effect of compelling the cheating old beldam to be more discreet and wary in the sale of her magical wares, and more particularly of coloured bean-meal, *alias* *poudre rosé*, at the rate of five francs the half-ounce. This nefarious traffic was, as I have intimated, at all events ostensibly, publicly repudiated by the retired officer of customs, albeit it was confidently hinted that upon more than one occasion, when tempted by a sufficiently considerable fee, he had violated that wise resolution, and dispensed his mother's nostrums—especially the *poudre rosé*—with the best effect. This, I say, was the common scandal or gossip of a district on the left bank of the Rhône, not far from the city of Lyon,

no longer ago than the thirty-seventh year of this enlightened nineteenth century; and I greatly doubt whether a rural commune could be pointed out in all the vast extent of France where a like credulity is not more or less prevalent at this very day. This is a sad, undeniable truism; but it is not from our English glass-house that we can contemptuously cast stones, in scornful reprobation of such hurtful follies, at our neighbours; for superstitions all as gross are to be found in as vigorous vitality in many of the rural districts of Great Britain. Imposture and credulity are unfortunately indigenous to all countries and climes, as well as marvellously self-adaptive to varying exigencies and conditions.

But in stopping to explain or moralise, the story perforce halts also; and dismissing for a while Jules Delpech, and his visions, schemes, nostrums, I regain its current, at the moment of Adrienne Beaudésert's arrival at the Château d'Em, where she was received with every demonstration of regard; and it really seemed that Madame de Vautpré's heart was touched by the sorrow of the interesting grand-niece, in whose features she discerned, or fancied, a striking resemblance to General Beaudésert, the brother, whose memory, spite of the Bresson *mésalliance*, she had always tenderly cherished. The establishment of the château was an extremely well-ordered one; its disciplinary march, perfect in a mechanical point of view; but it was unfortunate for a girl of Adrienne Beaudésert's temperament and tendencies that Madame de Vautpré had already reached so far into the vale of life, as not only to have lost sight of the busy, practical world in which she had passed her youth and prime of days, but that it no longer lingered in her memory save as a far-off dream of acted vanities; illusions—excepting always the hallowing verity of high lineage—hurtful, if not sinful to voluntarily dwell upon, because tending to lure her mind from the contemplation, through the dusky glass of polemical dogmatism, of the eternity upon the brink of which she stood. Now, it is quite clear to me, from what I have heard and read of Madame la Baronne de Vautpré, that her ascetic piety was of the sincerest kind, as assuredly her charity—thereby meaning *alms-giving*—was liberal and comprehensive; but the adoption of a profitable piety by dependents not only frequently stops at, but exaggerates the externals of devotion; and as might be expected in such a household, most of the persons in attendance upon the heiress, in their anxious affectation of a religious fervour they did not feel, were enthusiastic about forms, attributed supernatural efficacy to beads, if not to the prayers they measured—to the image, though careless or unthoughtful of the prototype. In a mental atmosphere so generated and maintained, it is hardly to be wondered at that the faith in charms, amulets, and the like fantasies, imbibed by Adrienne Beaudésert in her childhood, instead of being rebuked, gathered force and authority from the countenance afforded it by apparently similar religious convictions. Had the Abbé Morlaix, now chaplain to the household, possessed her confidence, his wiser teaching might have dissipated such noxious illusions; but since that, as she deemed it, heartless, cruel funeral oration, Mademoiselle Beaudésert, despite the abbé's strenuous endeavours to conciliate her good-will, ceased not to regard him with mingled feelings of aversion and mistrust. Instead of complaining to Madame de Vautpré that the sensitive girl resolutely declined his spiritual guidance, the abbé left it to time to remove her unjust antipathy—but alas! time frequently halts in the accomplishment of his errands, and arrives with the healing remedy only to witness the death of the patient.

Thus grew in years, in beauty, in guileless simplicity of heart and mind, Adrienne Beaudésert;

Madame de Vautpré continuing the while towards her the stately courtesy, the regulated, unvarying kindness which she had from the first imposed upon herself. Madame la Baronne never went into society, nor encouraged visitors at the château. Adrienne's education in the accomplishments of music, painting, history, foreign languages, &c., was intrusted to the sisters of a Ursuline convent in the neighbourhood; whither and back she was daily escorted in a carriage; and the only male persons, except servants and M. Morlaix, with whom she ever held the slightest converse, were Jules Delpech and his son Paul, one or other of whom she was pretty sure to meet whenever she ventured—never without a watchful attendant—beyond the château grounds. They had always a very respectful, yet, as it were, kindly familiar greeting for her; and handsome Paul—it was impossible that Mademoiselle Beaudésert, slightly impressionable as she was in that direction, could help remarking that he was a very handsome young fellow—had often a fresh bouquet to present, whatever was the season of the year. These *rencontres* do not appear to have been reported to Madame de Vautpré or the Abbé Morlaix, or what they might, and justly, have deemed the impertinent audacity of the Delpechs, would, there can be little doubt, have been summarily repressed.

But it was not such love as that with which Paul Delpech had the vanity to believe he had inspired the girl-heiress, that, by the time she touched upon her sixteenth birthday, had banished every tinge of colour from the drooping maiden's cheek, light from her eyes, wasted her finely rounded form, and still burned in her veins with the fever of a consuming passion. Adrienne Beaudésert, child or girl of exquisite sensibility, was, be it remembered, morally isolated in her relative's magnificent abode, with no one to love, and beloved by none; the aching void thus created becoming, with every passing day, more completely monopolised, filled to bursting by the imaged memories of her mother and sister; of that tender mother, that sweet sister, who so fully reciprocated her gushing, passionate love; but whom she was only permitted to see once in each dreary year, and in the constraining presence of Madame la Baronne; to correspond with only at stated intervals, and under the same chilling supervision. Adrienne's heart beat wildly, rebelliously, against those cruel, unnatural restraints; and who at all conversant with poor human nature, will feel surprise that, finding her aunt inexorable, callous, deaf to her tears, entreaties, prayers, the indignant girl began to listen with kindling eyes and glowing cheeks to remarks upon Madame de Vautpré's fast-failing health, hating herself the while, as she afterwards declared, for the involuntary feeling revealed in those keenly marked, tell-tale signs; that in moments of great irritation, words of the like significance, eagerly caught up, repeated, exaggerated, distorted, escaped her lips; or that, after a last, supreme effort, preceded by sets of prayers, gone through as if they were so many incantations—votive garlands, suspended upon statues of the Virgin and saints—to shake Madame de Vautpré's fixed resolve, had failed, the girl with much less excuse, because with more deliberation, poured forth her passionate feelings to her mother in writing? This letter she thought to have sent off surreptitiously, but the treachery of the servant to whom it was intrusted, placed in the hands of M. Morlaix—all the griefs, resentments, hopes, and anticipations by which her mind was distracted! The abbé was profoundly disturbed upon reading the intercepted letter; and immediately sending for Mademoiselle Beaudésert, sternly upbraided her with the black ingratitude displayed in the sinful effusion she had dared to pen; dwelt especially upon the heinous crime of but *imagining* the death of her kind relative and benefactress; concluding with a solemn

warning that one of God's heaviest judgments was to curse the wicked with the fulfilment of their own evil wishes.

Adrienne Beaudésert was rebuked, humbled, terrified—but not softened or subdued, as she would have been to tears of deepest contrition, had but a few words of kindness or compassion mingled with the abbé's stern homily. The strong consciousness that whatever seeming colour or justification, her wild, hasty expressions might give to the abbé's injurious denunciations, her heart had never for one moment harboured the dreadful thoughts to which those denunciations pointed, helped to sustain her yielding, flexible nature during the terrible interview; and not till, escaped to the privacy of her own chamber, did she sink upon the floor, crushed, convulsed by the rending agony of humiliated pride, degrading accusation, and bitter self-reproach.

No doubt, too, she felt, as the tumult of conflicting passions calmed somewhat, that M. Morlaix would deem it his duty to place the letter, blackened with his own comments, before Madame de Vautpré; and then farewell for ever to the visions of future independence and grandeur in which she had, it seemed, not thoughtlessly only, but wickedly indulged. Not that Adrienne Beaudésert, child-thoughted girl, valued present or prospective splendour very highly, but her mother did—as we, remembering how impatiently Madame Beaudésert bore the evanishment of her own dream of youthful grandeur, can easily believe—and at her yearly visits, talked privately of little else than the coming, though it might be distant time, which was to compensate a thousandfold for the bitter past, the halting, unsatisfactory present. Here was a new grief, but, as it proved, an imaginary one only; as the abbé, whether wisely or not the sequel will shew, did not communicate or mention the contents of the letter to Madame de Vautpré. During these painful passages in Mademoiselle Beaudésert's girl-life, and indeed almost from the first day of her domiciliation at the Château d'Em, Jules Delpech had contrived to keep himself acquainted with all that passed there; and with the blind infatuation of a foregone conclusion, persisted in persuading himself, or trying to do so, that the change in Adrienne's personal appearance, her reported fits of moody melancholy, were solely attributable to a growing and invincible attachment to his son—an attachment that would perhaps be openly avowed when the tomb closed over Madame de Vautpré—an event which, he believed, would not be long waited for. Nor was this sinister belief or trust unfounded.

The elasticity of hope is in youth rarely completely crushed; and before many days had gone by, Adrienne's brain was again busy with expedients for bringing about the family reconciliation upon which her mind was set with such morbid intensity; and all the more eagerly, that the third annual visit of her relatives was close at hand. But the resources of tears, supplications, incantations, votive-offerings, having failed, what other device remained likely to insure a fortunate result? Mademoiselle Beaudésert was thus anxiously ruminating, when Lisette Mendon, a favourite and shrewd attendant, took occasion, whilst perfecting the transparent-thoughted young lady's dinner-toilet, to remark, with reference to a wedding soon to take place among the château servants, how extraordinary it was that *ce gros vieux Bonsard* should have won so easily the affections of young and pretty Fanchette Lenoir, who was, moreover, quite as well, if not better off, than he. 'Certainly,' she added with emphasis, 'such a match could not have been brought about without the help of the *poudre rosé*, or similar magic compound.'

'*Poudre rosé!*' murmured Adrienne, turning her unquiet, dreamy eyes upon the attendant; 'I have

heard that spoken of before. What are its real or supposititious virtues?"

"I can assure mademoiselle," replied Lisette, "that there is no supposition in the case. The *poudre rosé* is well known to possess extraordinary virtues, though I should not like Madame de Vautpré or the Abbé Morlaix, both of whom have unreasonable prejudices upon such matters, to hear me say so. For example, there was Marie Deveulle, a widow with a strong cast in her eyes, four small children, and not a liard's worth of property, who married, about a fortnight after she was seen to pay a sly visit to the late Madame Delpech, Jean Lucas, a good-looking young farmer, and one of the most prosperous in the commune. It must be admitted that nothing short of very marvellous magic could have accomplished such a marriage as that. For my part," added Lisette, "I should feel no scruple, if an opportunity occurred— But I am fatiguing mademoiselle."

"Not at all, Lisette; you interest me, on the contrary. How is this precious *poudre rosé* administered?"

"Nothing more simple, mademoiselle. The prescribed quantity is placed in a glass of wine, a cup of coffee—no matter what. The wine or coffee is then handed—let us, by way of illustration, suppose—to Jean Lucas by Marie Deveulle, she looking her *futur* smilingly in the face all the while; he drinks, and the affair is finished. Certainly, there can be no such great harm in all that, even if everybody, with the exception of Madame la Baronne and Monsieur Morlaix, deceive themselves as to the wonderful powers of the *poudre rosé*."

"No harm, as you say, Lisette, if no good. And is it not said to be equally efficacious in reconciling enmities—between, for example, estranged relatives?"

"O yes, mademoiselle; I could tell you of several such instances—of one particularly, where"—

Lisette's instances were cut short by the last summons of the dinner-bell. But the interesting colloquy was renewed the next day, when the wily confidante succeeded, if not in persuading Mademoiselle Beaudésert into an absolute belief in the miraculous properties of the *poudre rosé*, to at least consult Delpech *père* upon the subject. "My father's friend," thought Adrienne, "who will be sure to deal frankly with me. My grandmamma," she added aloud, "had great faith in such charms. Still, I can hardly— But, as you say, Lisette, there can be no possible harm in making the trial;" and her scruples thus silenced, the rash girl sat down to write a note appointing a private interview with Delpech on the morrow, at a place indicated by Lisette, and not very distant from the château.

"Paul Delpech, mademoiselle," hastily interposed the waiting-woman, as her unsuspecting mistress was about to address the note.

"Yes, certainly. I had it in my head, as I told you, that Paul was the son's name; but of course you know. You will keep this, perhaps foolish, matter profoundly secret," she added, as Lisette was leaving the room.

"Secret as the grave," replied the young woman quickly, and with averted face, lest Adrienne should see the triumph flashing there. "Delpech himself shall not suspect that I am aware of the contents of this note; mademoiselle may fully rely upon me."

"Here is the *assignation*, monsieur," said Lisette Meudon about an hour afterwards, addressing Jules Delpech. "You turn pale, and tremble very much," she presently added. "There is, I hope, nothing more meant by this frolic than what I know of?"

"Nothing—nothing, Lisette," replied Delpech, fumbling in his purse with shaking fingers for some gold pieces, and placing them in her ready palm. "And when the wedding takes place, yours with

Claude Simonet—if a fat dowry can win the old man's consent—will not be far off."

"That is well understood, Monsieur Delpech. But tell me why," added the young woman, still under the influence of a suddenly awakened feeling of distrust—"if you are so positive Mademoiselle Beaudésert has a decided *penchant* for your handsome son, are you so anxious to compromise her by these pretended assignations? As to the *poudre rosé* pretence, that, excuse me, is as absurd as the faith of the credulous fools about here in its wonder-working powers."

"You err, Lisette," replied Delpech. "If Mademoiselle Beaudésert once partakes of some wine, tintured with *poudre rosé*, in Paul's presence, I shall have no fear that the wedding will be long delayed after Madame la Baronne has taken her place in the vaults of the Church of the Assumption."

"That may be, Monsieur Delpech; but you know Mademoiselle Beaudésert will never do anything of the kind, just as well as I do, that you dare not propose it to her. I have no misgivings upon that point. Mademoiselle is as sensitive and proud as she is pure and simple-hearted. Still," added Lisette, "one of that numerous class of persons whose aid in evil purposes may, for a sufficiently tempting reward, be counted upon to a certain extent, but no further—'still it occurs to me, that if you really are so confident'—"

"I will be frank with you, Lisette Meudon," interrupted Delpech, swallowing the rage he felt at the woman's persistence. "I saw Madame la Baronne a few days since: she is going fast; Mademoiselle Beaudésert will soon and suddenly find herself in a dazzling position, which now she can have no just idea of. Her mother, a woman of the world, will be with her—parasites, flatterers, suitors innumerable, will crowd about her. All this may turn her head. It is prudent, therefore, to strengthen Paul's hold upon her fancy by these little compromising arts, which, when one is prompted by a laudable ambition, are, you will agree, perfectly permissible."

"Perhaps. However, I do not see that any great harm can accrue. The marriage-portion," added Lisette, opening and holding the door in her hand—"the marriage-portion, Monsieur Delpech will do well to remember, should he succeed in his audacious project, must be a liberal one, and legally secured *before* the grand wedding takes place."

"Precisely, *ma fille*. Paul and myself, moreover, will owe you a large debt of gratitude for your services and silence."

"*Chut, chut!* I look to be rewarded by money, not moonshine, Monsieur Delpech."

"Claude Simonet," said Jules Delpech with a wry grimace, meant for a complimentary smile—"Claude Simonet won't be the father of fools, if his children take after his pretty wife."

"He won't, in that case, be the father of *dupes*," was the retort; "a fact which, I repeat, the Delpechs, father and son, will do well to bear in mind. *Bon-jour, monsieur.*"

"*Au plaisir*, Mademoiselle Meudon," responded Jules Delpech, adding with a savage snap of his teeth as the door closed: "The insolent hussy! I should like, instead of a dowry, to accommodate her with a"— What, he did not say; but one might have sworn from his looks it was something which Lisette Meudon would have decidedly demurred to as the substitute for a handsome marriage-portion.

The child-heart of Adrienne Beaudésert bent violently, and a vague feeling of terror so oppressed her, upon approaching the appointed rendezvous on the following day, that she was upon the point of turning back and abandoning her purpose. "It was the last effort," she afterwards said, "of my guardian angel to draw me back from the precipice to which

I was madly hastening. It was made in vain. I shook off the warning impulse, bade the valet remain where he was for a few minutes, and hastened on.'

Jules Delpech would have made a capital actor, if one might judge by his natural assumption of surprise and deferential interest, as Mademoiselle Beaudésert, blushing and painfully agitated, stood before him. It was some time before he appeared able to even dimly make out her meaning from the confused, hurried sentences in which it was expressed. At last he seemed to catch it, but still uncertainly.

'Mademoiselle Beaudésert wishes to know of me if there is any truth in the reported marvels effected by the *poudre rosé*. Do I rightly comprehend her?'

'Yes, that is the question I wish to put; and if—; but perhaps it is all an idle tale?'

'It is *not* an idle tale,' replied Delpech, with well-sembled gravity and earnestness. 'The miraculous properties of the *poudre rosé* have been proved over and over again; but mademoiselle is perhaps not aware that to dispense it is to act in contravention of the law, though not of morality?'

'O no, I had not thought of that; and I would not for the world that!—'

'If, mademoiselle,' interrupted Delpech, 'will tell me frankly for what purpose she requires the *poudre rosé*, the wish to serve a daughter of the noble-minded victim who once honoured me with the name of friend, will, if I see a probability of doing so effectively, render me indifferent to any legal penalties I may incur.'

'Ah, monsieur,' said Adrienne, her soft eyes filling with tears at the allusion to her father, 'it is because you were *his* friend that I wished to consult you, knowing that I should not be either deceived or exposed to ridicule. I have a fancy to try the effect of *poudre rosé* upon—upon Madame de Vautpré.'

'Madame de Vautpré!' ejaculated Jules Delpech, in a tone and with a start that would not have disgraced Talma—'Madame de Vautpré! For what purpose, in the name of Heaven?'

Adrienne explained; Jules Delpech the while, as she subsequently recalled to mind, though too agitated and confused at the moment to appreciate its strange significance—Jules Delpech, I say, gazing the while into her eyes with a piercing intensity, as if more desirous of reading there the secret of her soul, than of listening to the words of her mouth.

'I understand you, Mademoiselle Beaudésert,' said Delpech, with slow, stage-solemnity of speech. 'The *poudre rosé* will effect your purpose in giving it to Madame de Vautpré.'

'Seriously, I am so glad; for do you know, Monsieur Delpech, I felt almost sure that you would say it was a childish, absurd illusion.'

'When shall I place it in mademoiselle's hands?' inquired Delpech.

'To-morrow, if you please, at this place and hour.'

'Be it so, mademoiselle: I will be punctual and silent.'

'Almost a woman, and a charming one too in person,' muttered Delpech, looking after Mademoiselle Beaudésert as she hurried back to where she had left the valet—'in mind, the veriest child! The amiable Ursulines may prepare their pupils very well for heaven, but certainly they do not succeed in fitting them to deal with this wicked world. After all, Paul will make her an excellent husband; and if, which is quite possible, we have deceived ourselves as to the young lady's partiality for him, or at least that it is so decided as to induce her to stoop to a union with him from the height whereon a very few days, or I err greatly, will see her placed, it will require the iron link which I have so successfully begun to forge, to coerce and bind her pridelike will. As yet, at all events, I can say *beau jeu, bien joué*; and, best of all,

should our audacious project, as it may be truly called, fail, neither Paul nor I shall be seriously compromised, as I will manage; but it will not, *cannot* fail.'

Madame Beaudésert and her daughter Clarisse had passed the stipulated number of hours at the Château d'Em, and were seated at breakfast with Madame de Vautpré, M. Morlaix, and Adrienne; which repast concluded, the two visitors would be conveyed, in a carriage already in waiting, to the *Messageries Royales*, Lyon, en route for Clichy. M. Morlaix could not help remarking that Adrienne was very much more restless, perturbed, ill at ease, than on the like former occasions. And why were the burning eyes of the pale, agitated girl turned with such intense, sudden scrutiny upon Madame de Vautpré's countenance when Madame and Clarisse Beaudésert handed chocolate to that lady? Was it that Adrienne's solicitude was awakened by the signs of recent and severe suffering visible there, for Madame de Vautpré had passed a much worse night than usual, and at her own request had received the sacrament soon after rising.

The abbé would fain have believed so, but could not, knowing what he did. It was rather, he greatly feared, that that young, and, as he once thought, guileless, unworldly heart, was agitated by criminal hopes, which those signs of probably mortal disease had quickened and inflamed.

A harsh but perhaps not unnatural judgment! Poor Adrienne's criminal hopes were, in sooth, limited to the magical effect produced by the *poudre rosé*. Certainly, Madame de Vautpré's demeanour was more gracious towards her mother and sister than on former occasions; and, unhopd-for condescension! suffering and feeble as she was, Madame la Baronne would accompany them down the grand stairs to the entrance-hall; had shaken hands with Madame Beaudésert, and was about apparently to embrace Clarisse, when she suddenly staggered, caught wildly at vacancy, and fell heavily upon the tessellated pavement, before a hand could be stretched forth to save her. A medical gentleman, who had resided for several weeks at the château, was quickly on the spot, and opened a vein; a few drops of dark blood flowed, and at the end of a few breathless minutes, the man of science announced, in a grave whisper, that Madame de Vautpré was dead—dead of apoplexy!

'Apoplexy! you are certain of apoplexy!' said the abbé, addressing the surgeon, but with his stern glance fixed upon Adrienne's changing countenance, till she, overcome by a rush of contending emotion, lost her senses, and sank with a low moaning cry into her mother's arms.

FOOTPRINTS.

FROM the time of Robinson Crusoe downward, there has always been a sort of mysterious curiosity in people's minds when they encounter under peculiar circumstances, or in peculiar places, footprints, whether human or animal. Even in places well frequented, the print of a foot will often throw us into a train of thought, and sometimes arouse much interest, and even wonder—as, for instance, the mysterious footprints in the snow which occurred in Devonshire about three years ago, and which many people did not hesitate to ascribe to no less a personage than the Evil One. Sometimes other feelings than mere curiosity will prevail. Many a time when I have lost my way in the snow on the hills, have I been glad to light upon some track which I knew would bring me, if not to my destination, at least to some safe place where I could regain my bearings.

How well one can fancy the jealous suspicion with which early explorers examined such marks in

an unknown and undescribed country; whether they proceeded from man or animals; if the former, whether they were the traces of natives, against whom they must carefully guard; and if the latter, whether of wild beasts, ready to pounce upon the unwary traveller, or of a more tame and domestic species, which they might hope to use for their own purposes in their new settlements.

In the present advanced state of natural history and geography, it would be almost impossible to discover any fresh countries, or even to lay hold of many new species of animals; but an equally interesting and mysterious study is opened to us—that of fossil footprints, as we find them engraven in the rocks of distant epochs, and which will remain as traces of the inhabitants of those ages for all time. This is a wide field open both to the geologist and the naturalist, one which calls into play all their reasoning powers and arguments—the one, to determine the age in which the marks were imprinted, the characters of the rock, and the conditions under which such creatures lived—the other, to ascertain the genera and species of such animals, whether mammals, birds, or reptiles, and in what classification of paleontology and natural history it should be placed. I propose in this paper to examine some of the most noted fossil marks of the kind, without burdening the minds of my readers with more geological technicalities than are absolutely necessary.

Fossil prints are by no means limited to any one formation, but are pretty general even down to very old stratified rocks; but the greatest number are to be found in the triassic formation. First let us inquire what this is, and where it occurs. In the regular order of strata of the earth's crust, beginning from above downward, we should first come upon the tertiary series, with its many important subdivisions, of which the best examples I can give are the clays of the Isle of Wight, and of the country extending from London to Norfolk. Below this is the chalk, with the green-sands and wealden, which everybody has seen who has visited the south of England, in the cliffs of Brighton and the downs of Kent.

Next we get the oolitic deposits, which are divided and subdivided into a great many subordinate layers, such as the Portland stone, Oxford clay, Kimmeridge clay, Forest marble, &c., and of which the country around Bath and Cheltenham is composed. These are succeeded by the lias, which is to be best seen in the cliffs of the Dorsetshire coast, and is the great repository of those enormous creatures, the ichthyosaurus and plesiosaurus, the fossil skeletons of which may be seen in the Geological Museum in Jermyn Street. We now arrive at the one we want—the trias or triassic formation, otherwise known as the new red sandstone. Everybody knows what red sandstone is—the differences between the new and old red formations are the differences of age, of the character of the deposits, and of the fossil remains. The parts of England where the new red can be best seen and studied are in Lancashire, in almost all Cheshire, and in portions of Shropshire and Warwickshire. This is enough to shew what an extensive surface is composed of these strata in this country. The trias are important too, not only geologically but commercially; for it is here that we find the great supply of salt; and were it not for this formation, we should come badly off for this very necessary article. The thickness of the whole series is about 1800 feet in England, for there is one member of the series which is developed abroad, and not known at all here. The highest division consists of what is called the Keuper beds (but which in general terms we may call the saliferous beds, as it is principally amongst their

layers that the masses of salt are found), and are made up of alternate layers of sandstone, gypsum, clays, and marls. The middle series, termed abroad the Muschelkalk, is unknown here, as just stated, and is the most fossiliferous portion, producing the greatest variety of shells. The third and lowest is the Bunter sandstone, which in this country is about 600 feet in thickness, and contains red and green shales and marls, with sometimes white sandstones of a quartzose nature. This lowest series does not by any means swarm with fossils, but what there are, are deeply interesting. It is in this Bunter sandstone that we come upon the footprints, which may be well seen, either at the quarries near Lymm in Cheshire, or at Storeton Hill, not far from Birkenhead. They are like the impressions of a large human hand, and from this, for a long time, the animal supposed to have made the marks was called the cheirotherium, or the hand-footed beast. Now, the curious part of it was that the impressions of the hind foot are very much larger than those of the front, the hind foot being about eight inches long and five broad, and the other not more than half the size. The steps follow each other in regular pairs, at intervals of about fourteen inches between each pair; and each mark gives the impression of five toes, of which the first or great toe was bent out just like a thumb. Added to this is the fact, that on the same slabs were discovered ripple-marks, and in some places the marks of rain-drops. Here was a puzzle. Why had not this creature left its bones behind it to tell us at once what it belonged to? since bones it must have had, and a tolerably heavy body, to have left so deep a footprint. Doctors differed on the subject; some naturalists put them down as belonging to animals of the kangaroo tribe, because there is in them the same disproportion between the hind and the front feet. Others thought that the marks were made by batrachians, or frog-like creatures, and others, again, that they were crocodilian. One thing was clear, and that was, that the sandstone upon which they had walked had once been a wet beach, which had sunk down so as to allow a fresh wet beach to be formed above it; and this was borne out by the testimony of the ripple-marks. They must, therefore, have been air-breathers. While the savans were puzzling over this problem, some teeth were discovered in the same formation in Warwickshire, which Professor Owen, on examination, declared to be the teeth of some batrachian reptile of a gigantic size. The teeth were very peculiar, a section of them presenting a large number of labyrinthine folds and windings; and from this fact he named the possessor of the teeth the labyrinthodon. Afterwards, the discovery of a few bones, also in the same series, enabled him to put all his facts together, and infer with every probability that the labyrinthodon and the cheirotherium were one and the same, and that they were large toadlike, air-breathing reptiles.

This is only one of the many brilliant examples shewn by our eminent men in the study of geology, of the skill with which their experience and analogical reasoning have enabled them to build up the form of an extinct animal from such slight links as a tooth and a footmark. If we turn from England, and step across the Atlantic, we shall find similar phenomena under similar circumstances. In Connecticut state is a series of new red sandstone rocks, lying in a depression of older granitic rocks, of an area of more than 150 miles in length, and in thickness exceeding 1000 feet. The labyrinthodon is not the only animal that has left his tracks behind him there; there are also marks of birds, lizards, &c. Professor Hitchcock, the American geologist, has distinctly traced the footprints of thirty species of birds, five of lizards, two of the chelonians or tortoise tribe, and six of the batrachians; and as Sir Charles Lyell tells us, the

impressions have been found over a space of eighty miles. This district must have been, therefore, a grand rendezvous, or, as it was on a shore, we may call it a fashionable watering-place for these extinct gentry. The steps of the birds are of all sizes, but almost all betokening the same character of the foot—that is, having three toes, and possessing the same number of joints as are found in living birds of this class.

The size of the stride which the bird would take, as ascertained from the distances between each impression, is strictly in proportion to the size of the footmarks. The large dimensions that these birds must have attained, far exceeding that of the ostrich, staggered the naturalists, who could scarcely believe that they were birds; but the subsequent discovery of fossil bones and skeletons of birds, now extinct, in Australia, such as the *dinornis*, quite dispose of that objection. Mixed up with all these footprints are also those of the labyrinthodon, and another species called the *rhynchosauros*, which, in its skeleton, was something between a bird and a tortoise.

We will now leave the triassic formation, and see what is to be found in the Permian strata, which come next in order. Permian or magnesian limestone was so named, by Sir R. Murchison, from the kingdom of Perm in Russia, which is principally formed of those rocks, and consists of series of marls, clays, and conglomerates, more or less coloured; and besides these, of a large amount of limestone, which is characterised by the presence of magnesia, and is termed dolomite. It possesses some very characteristic fossils, more allied to those of the coal-measures than any of the formations above; but it is not so largely developed as the new red sandstone, although many beds which were formerly put down as triassic are now placed in the Permian division.

In Annandale in Dumfriesshire, is the large Permian quarry of Cornecockle Muir, belonging to Sir W. Jardine, and many large footprints have been found here; one in particular, named the 'Chelichyns Titan,' is the impression left by a gigantic tortoise, which must have been larger than a hippopotamus. In some instances, too, there is evidence of the creature having lifted his foot up and put it down again clogged with the mud and sand that clung to it. In the coal formation, again, which lies below the Permian, are the footsteps of an animal allied to the cheirotherium, although hitherto it has only been remarked in Pennsylvania. They are not actually in the coal, but in the sandstones which are interpolated between the coal-measures; and although similar, they are not exactly of the same species as the reptiles of the triassic period, for the toes are almost all of the same size, and there is not the marked difference between the hind and foremost foot. In the layers of rock, too, between the coal-measures at Beaufort, in the South Wales coal-field, have been noticed small impressions, probably of some crustaceans.

In the next great division, the old red sandstone, there are a few animal foot-tracks. I have in my collection a slab of old red (in age, my readers must remember, long prior to the new red) from a quarry at Puddleston, near Leominster in Herefordshire, upon which there is a well-marked ripple, and the footprints of a crustacean which walked along the beach. It is evident, from the size and the close position of the impressions, that it must have been a very small creature, which progressed very slowly. Let not my readers fancy that fossil footprints are common in any formation; their rarity makes them the more valuable, and often have the theories which have taken years to mature been upset at once by the discovery of one little bit of evidence like this. I have not in this paper touched upon any other fossil markings—such as impressions

of annelids—for these could scarcely be included under the head of Footprints; but I trust that my readers will at once recognise the wonderful amount of study and patient perseverance that has enabled the world to read in the history of the past, not only the general characteristics, but also the minutiae of the former tenants of the globe.

OUR MAJOR'S SPOON.

I DID not steal it, gentle reader; he gave it to me himself. It was one evening after mess some hours; indeed, it was nearly ten o'clock, when several members of the ward-room of H.M.S. *Blunderbore* were seated round the table discussing their liquid night-caps before retiring to their virtuous couches. Our major (of the 101st, then on board) was one, as also was your humble servant, who will explain how it came about that you are now put in possession of our major's spoon. First, however, let me introduce the major himself.

He was of the middle height, and of a portly figure—portly, but not absolutely podgy. The major had work in him, and was as good for a long forced march, with a row at the end of it, as any officer ten years younger than himself. Still, he was stout, and his figure had an increasing tendency towards the form of the great globe. In countenance he was open, expansive, cheerful, friendly, rubicund. I do not speak of the 'chiseling' of his nose, because portwine and other creature comforts had somewhat unchiseled it; and, moreover, our major was often heard to assert that he 'would only like to see the man that could chisel him!' I mention his eyes, because they were gray and merry; and his hair and astonishing whiskers, because they were luxuriant and, and ferociously good-humoured.

In short, our major was a good major, and he loved Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Izaak Walton, Walter Scott, and Whisky Toddy. He was a pleasant major at all times; but while leisurely sipping his third tumbler, he was a companion for the gods—at least for the respectable ones, if there are any.

At the time of which I speak, the major was at his second tumbler; and, he being apparently a little thoughtful, conversation had flagged. At length, feeling the silence irksome, I rose to go, when I was stopped by his saying: 'Hold on, Peter; don't go yet. If you'll stop, I'll give you one of my spoons.'

What he meant by giving me one of his spoons, I could not imagine; but having entire faith in him, I straightway resealed myself, and at a sign from him, replenished my glass. The offer of one of the spoons was received by the others with much clapping of hands and knocking of tumblers on the table, though what they could have to do with a spoon that was offered to me personally, I could not divine.

While the major was scientifically compounding his third and final tumbler, I occupied myself with vain attempts at guessing what these spoons could really be. Could they be *bond-fide* plain metal spoons? No. He was not rich, nor I poor enough for such gifts as gold or silver to pass between us, and the major had a soul above pewter or Britannia metal. Perhaps they were some curious old carved apostle spoons which he was going to shew, not give us. Perhaps—

'The first occasion,' began the major, 'on which I had the misfortune to get spooney'—

'Oh, that's it, is it? I see now.'

'Then, Peter, shut thy mouth, and thou shalt hear as well as see;' and here followed the history of our major's first spoon.

'The first occasion on which I had the misfortune to get spooney was on this wise. I had been but a few months in the service, and was young, inflammable, and ardent. That I was formed in every way

a fit object for the tender passion, you yourselves can see without the help of spectacles; that, in this instance, I was a most unfortunate subject of it, you yourselves shall hear, if my emotion at the recollection will allow me to proceed with the tale of my sorrows.

'I had been appointed to the *Staghound*, 46, a fine frigate, as we thought in those days, but scarcely fit to be a jolly-boat to those they are building now. Small, however, though she was, there was room enough in her for the expansion of much good feeling, and we were what is called a happy ship. The skipper was a plain, sensible man, very different from the common run of boobies, who fancy that every thing and man on board the ship is there for the sole purpose of swelling their own special pomp and dignity, and are always in dread lest they should knock out some of the stars with their numskulls. He liked to see the duty well done, and had sense enough to know that work done "with a will," as the old saying goes, is sure to be well done. Knowing this, he laid his plans to make officers and men as comfortable as the circumstances would permit. It would be tedious and useless to say how he set about it—how the stupid old Admiralty counterblast to tobacco was put by on a shelf to be taken care of, while smoking was allowed at all hours; how every comfort and convenience obtainable was at once put in requisition; and how every indulgence was granted, so that the duty was first well provided for. Suffice it, that the skipper's efforts, ably seconded by the officers as soon as they saw his aim, were crowned with triumphant success; and we arrived on our station, at the mouth of the Fraser River, in the Oregon territory, with the ship, officers, and ship's company, all in the very best of health and spirits.

'It was a glorious place. We had contrived to get the ship over the bar, and were lying about two miles up, surrounded on all sides by forest-clad hills and grassy valleys. Not far from us was a fort belonging to the Hudson Bay Company, to the officers of which the herds of half-wild horses that pastured in the valleys belonged. The woods teemed with game, and the water with fish; so that we never wanted a day's sport, nor a delicious addition to the dinner-table.

'For some time I gave myself up to a sporting-life. The officers of the Company had kindly given us leave and assistance to catch and break as many horses as we pleased, and I, with a couple of smart nags—on which my servant attended as groom—my gun, and my rod, with an occasional excursion into the land of poesy, was as happy as the day was long.'

'Got any of your poems now, major?' interrupted the paymaster. 'I should say you would beat Byron into fits. I had a messmate once who was a grand poet. Here are two of his lines—

Let's hurl these despots from their glittering thrones,
And make 'em eat unutterable bones.

Fine— isn't it? He repudiated the last line, and accused us of sticking it in; but that, you know, was only his modesty.'

'I sent the poems to a magazine; but the editor had no soul, and I have reason to believe he lit his pipe with them.'

'Ah, that shews there was fire in them, at any rate,' said the paymaster.

'Oh, shut up, Brooks, and let the major go on with his yarn,' exclaimed one of the audience.

'Well, to proceed,' continued the major. 'Many of our fellows used to visit at the fort; but I, being of a bashful and retiring nature, contented myself with smoking one cigar with the inhabitants, and then returned to my former amusements. I had become accustomed to the absence of ladies' society from necessity, and should have gone on happily and

prosperously until we left the place, had it not been for one unlucky day, and one deceitful purser.

'The niece of the commanding-officer had lately arrived at the fort, and taken all hearts by storm. A blue-eyed, cherry-lipped, peach-cheeked, dimple-faced damsel of seventeen, whose clustering bright brown curls half hid'—

'Go it, major,' interrupted the paymaster; 'that's your sort. Gushing creature!'

The major gave him a look which ought to have turned him into stone, and then continued his narration.

'The purser and I were the first favourites with the young lady, and the rest were nowhere. I could come on shore oftener than he could, and, taking advantage of this, I was most assiduous in my attentions. I danced with her, I walked with her, I sang with her, I read poetry with her, and I began to *teach her drawing*. All went smoothly as a marriage-bell. The perfidious purser had scarcely the ghost of a chance; and I felt sure that the sight of me in my full uniform, when she came off to church, one Sunday, had completely finished the business. But (Ah—h—h!) "Man proposes, and Providence disposes." Let me hasten to a conclusion (Oh—h—h—h!) before my feelings get the better of me.

'A picnic-party had been got up, mainly through my exertions. We mustered about fifteen, including Miss Edwardson. The scene of our rural felicity was to be a small grassy glade in the thick forest, just where a fine headlong trout-stream came dashing down into the bay—about as delightful a spot as can well be imagined; and right merrily did we enjoy ourselves. Among the crowd of admirers that surrounded her (there were always eight or ten), Miss Edwardson distinguished none but me. The purser looked at me savagely—at her, dismally; and despite his natural buoyancy of spirits, was either silent, or spoke in monosyllables. As I observed his spirits declining, so did mine rise, until at last I had become quite the lion of the party. My wit sparkled under the approving eyes of that sweet girl; and as the wine passed round after our dinner, beside that glorious stream, I kept the table, or rather the tablecloth, in a roar; or, as the humour seized me, I got them into a sentimental mood, and set them thinking of their absent loves.

'We got to singing. The purser sang a song, the refrain of which was, "There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip." Ah—h—h! I remember it but too well. Many other fellows sang; and when it came, I gave them a beautiful little thing I had composed for the occasion, beginning—

O no! we never mention her;
She's lovely—she's sublime! &c.

Only I could not manage to keep out of *Ben Backstay* and *Cease, rude Boreas*, into which two songs I was constantly tumbling, owing to a defective, or, perhaps, a too retentive memory, assisted by sundry glasses of champagne, which I had taken to get my courage up to the popping-point. At last Miss Edwardson prevailed upon to favour us, and she was getting on delightfully with *Love on, love on*, occasionally sending me up to the seventh heaven by a tender glance in the strong passages, when she suddenly broke off and exclaimed:

"Oh, oh! Oh, the darling! the love! Oh, the sweet pet! the beautiful creature! Oh, the little beauty!"

'She was either looking at me or over my shoulder. For a moment I really was as enough to believe that her passion for me had turned her brain; but seeing Williams rise from the grass rather hastily, and observing that he was intently regarding some object behind my back as I reclined beside my charming

lady-love, I looked round, and there saw the cause of her exclamations. It was a beautiful little animal of the ermine species—at least so I thought, though its coat was pure white, and it had no black tip to its bushy tail. The impudent little wretch looked at us for a minute, and took it so easy that I began to think it must have been some escaped pet; and when Ellen sang out again: "Oh, Mr Guthrie—oh, see how tame it is!—oh, do catch it for me, please—oh, do!" I rose at once to do so. At the same moment, all the others rose. I saw that perfidious purser sign to them, and thought they were coming to assist. I did not notice till afterwards that they had all retreated in an opposite direction.

The little beast had taken up his station at the foot of a grand old tree. His stern was turned towards us, and he was quietly and complacently surveying us over his shoulder. I made a run at him, and my hand was nearly on him, when— Ah me! the remembrance of my reception by that abominable animal I shall never forget. The love, the darling, the pet, the beautiful little creature, was neither more nor less than a skunk! I was almost suffocated, I was entirely beside myself with rage. I fell down, I yelled, I rolled in the grass, I rubbed the skin off my face. I held my nose, but the terrible effluvia got in at my mouth; I shut my mouth, and it rushed in at my nose. I screamed for help, and one or two of the less-experienced of our party came running down towards me; but no sooner had they got within fifty yards, than, simultaneously gripping their noses, they ran as if the Old Gentleman was after them. I rushed after the party myself, still vainly holding my nose; but no sooner did I approach, than they turned and ran as if for the bare life.

I was intolerable to myself. The dreadful perfume nearly maddened me. All my rubbing and scrubbing only took the skin off, without giving me any relief. I tore off my coat and waistcoat, and rushed into the stream. There was a steep fall close at hand; and there, under the dashing water, with just my nose and mouth out to get air, I sat. I dared not move out. Only when covered with water was existence tolerable.

I had been there some time, when I heard a voice hailing. It was the purser's, and he was evidently holding his nose.

"Hi, Tommy, where are you?"

"Here," I answered in a most doleful tone—"here, under the water-fall."

"That was a skunk you tried to catch," he called out, keeping a respectful distance, and still holding his nose.

"Don't I know it, you confounded booby!"

"Oh, I thought you might like to know the creature's name, in case you should ever fall in with another. Pretty little things, ain't they? Can I do anything for you?"

"No," I replied savagely. "I'm going on board."

"On board!" exclaimed Williams. "Why, man, you'd clear the ship. Nothing can live within fifty yards of you, nor won't be able to for a fortnight to come. You don't know how strong you are."

"Don't I, though!" I thought, feeling at the same time that I was strong enough, in another sense, to give him a good thrashing, if I could only get out; but that was hopeless.

"How queer you look there, under glancing water—quite like a jolly old river-god. Well, look here. You can't go on board; you had better walk round the head of the bay until you come to a half-ruined hut which is there. There you will have to stay for a fortnight or three weeks; and if you keep in the water all the time, you will probably have ceased to be aromatic. At present, you know, you are dreadful. I'll send you round clean clothes, grub, liquor, and

any other necessaries. Good-bye; take care of yourself. You'll have a very quiet life; I almost envy you. Good-bye."

"I am almost sure I heard him stifling a laugh. Could I have proved it, this world should not have held us both much longer.

Three mortal weeks did I exist, a miserable outcast, in that wretched hut. At the end of the second week, a messenger, holding his nose, presented me with a small packet. On opening it, I found it to contain a small portion of cake, and two cards tied together with white ribbon. On the small one was the name "MR WILLIAMS, R.N.," and on the larger one, "MRS WILLIAMS." My happiness was blasted for ever! I vowed from that time forth never, never more to love.

'Good-night; it's time for all reasonable people to be in bed,' said the major, suddenly changing his tone from a sentimental whine to his natural voice. 'Go to bed, then; and if you are good boys, I'll give you another spoon some other night.'

SILENT TEACHINGS.

WHILE overhead the rain-drops softly fell,

The sun sank slowly to his golden nest,
And myriad-tinted cloudlets seemed to tell

His gayest hues o'erspread the glowing west.
Sunshine and cloud so strangely mingled were,
That each made each appear more passing fair.

Far in the east—first like a snowy shroud

Preparing to enwrap the dying day,

Rose slowly in the heavens, a single cloud

With gradual darkening, till upon it lay

A mantle bright, of iris colours, spread

By setting sun and rain-drops overhead.

Only a fragment, yet how fair to view

The rainbow hues that decked the darkening sky;

While, as the gathering clouds the closer grew,

Each glorious tint assumed a deeper dye,

Till by a perfect arch the heavens were spanned;

A radiant coronet from God's own hand.

A lesson to my soul ye all have taught,

Rainbow and cloud, cool rain and glowing west;

Ye gave me comfort, when I little thought

Unspoken words could bid my spirit rest.

Gems of the sky! all silent though ye be,

A precious message have you brought to me.

Ye said: 'Not only must the sunbeam shine

Upon the gentle rain-drops as they fall,

But gathering clouds must with the twain combine:

The rainbow owes its being to them all.

Man's trials are but clouds, and, through his tears,

God's mercy like a glowing sun appears.

'Whom our God loves, He chastens—clouds may come;

Trials may meet him in this world of care;

Yet are they sent to bring him nearer home:

God makes him fit for heaven, then takes him there.

As by each darkening cloud the bow is shewn,

So, trials conquering, help to gem his crown.'

Last eve I prayed, 'Lord, take my clouds away;'

Now pray I, 'Lord, if needful, let them stay.'

R. B.

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